

CORPS' PONDENT

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US Army Corps
of Engineers
Portland District

**Native American Culture and
Traditions "Immersion Training"
at Indian Lake on the
Umatilla Indian Reservation**



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Commander: Col. John Eisenhower, P.E.
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Greetings, Portland District Team



As of Dec. 9, the District raised \$94,820 during its 2011 Combined Federal Campaign. Thus, once again, we have exceeded our established goal of \$80,000! Many thanks go to the individual efforts of Brianne Brende and Jaime Menagh who spearheaded this year's effort. Also, I express my greatest gratitude to all of you for sharing willingly and generously to assist those in need.

As we march forward into 2012, we are shaping our training plans for the upcoming year. Training is important and establishes the foundation from which we launch our success as a District. Establishing a strong Five-Year Individual Development Plan for each employee starts with the District knowing and articulating its clearly defined direction and objectives across our workforce. Once these are identified, the intent of your IDP should be to support District operations along with the attainment of your professional and personal goals. That is, we need to know what we are to accomplish and then set ourselves up for success by thoroughly identifying gaps to seek out the appropriate training to get us there.

IDPs should be done during the performance appraisal cycle and be reviewed and updated during mid-year performance reviews. Another good time for an IDP assessment is during the training needs survey which takes place in June. With that said, I request that each supervisor and employee spend some time thinking about how to make these IDPs realistic and focused – then take appropriate action to bring them to fruition over the coming year.

In the area of training, seek to incorporate a culture of innovation to improve upon our processes, shifting away from any 'business as usual' thinking. Focus on fundamentals with an entrepreneurial spirit. Avoid the typical bureaucratic approach, where possible. What do I mean by this? Simply put, don't allow the way we've always done business to place limitations on what you'd like to achieve, and once you've attained the training to succeed at your level, seek out higher level opportunities.

With the continuous development of new technologies, there are a multitude of options through which to attain a high level of expertise. Beyond the standard classroom training options, we now have significantly better opportunities for distance-learning, bringing in Mobile Training Teams of experts, and opportunities through other professional organizations.



Col. John Eisenhower, P.E.

If you know of an opportunity that the District has not identified, please let Jennifer Cannard, our District training officer, and your leadership know. Many of you are aware of activities in your field that we don't know about. We'll only be made aware through your efforts.

Why is this a focus? Some of the most dynamic and ground-breaking companies in the country encourage their employees to seek out innovative opportunities – resulting in positive effects. These companies have created and retained an exceptionally talented workforce that is on the cutting edge, and their employees have a personal stake in both their own and the organization's success. Thanks for your support in elevating the professionalism of our workforce!

As we enter the holiday season, I encourage all of you to focus on your families and take the time to send a note to those who are serving in harm's way. We currently have 23 employees deployed supporting National missions. I guarantee that each of these individuals would love to receive a note, knowing that we are thinking of them during this holiday season while they're away from their families.

Kate, Stella, and I send our warmest wishes for a fantastic holiday season and look forward to the exciting times in the year ahead. 📧

Essayons!

COL Ike



Help share the Corps' message

Expect higher downstream water levels during Willamette Valley flood season

The Willamette Valley Project's 13 dams operate as a system to help manage Willamette River Basin runoff, regulating 27 percent of the drainage area above Portland. From November through January, the dams help reduce flood damage downstream. Since 1996, they have reduce flood damage by an average of almost \$1 billion.


Last year, our dam safety program found that most of our Willamette Valley spillway gates show signs of age and the consequences of use outside of their original design guidance. Some are not up to current design standards based on engineering experience and advancing technology.

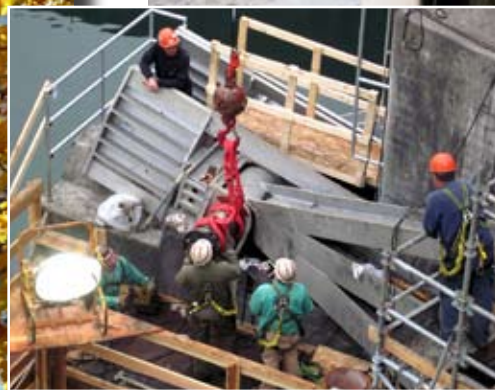
These conditions mean the gates may become overstressed during extreme inflows that result in significant pressure on the gates.

There is no immediate danger to the public, but we are taking measures to reduce risk, complete priority repairs and provide continued flood reduction benefits. We have imposed water level restrictions and gate operation changes at many of our dams to reduce pressure on the gates. The restrictions reduce our ability to store water by about 15 percent system-wide.

We intend to operate the project much the same as any other flood season. However, during a larger rain event or a series of events, people downstream of our dams may see water levels up to bankfull more often and for longer periods of time as we work to keep pool elevations below the restricted level. We manage water as a system so we cannot predict precisely how water will rise or flow in one tributary basin on a specific day.

We urge property owners and those living and working near the rivers to understand their level of risk and take preparedness actions. Our dams do a huge and important job, but aren't a substitute for smartly managing one's property and being prepared for an emergency.

For more information, please visit our website at <http://www.nwp.usace.army.mil/water/home.asp>, and keep up to date on the latest news using our Facebook and Twitter sites at <http://www.facebook.com/portlandcorps> and <http://twitter.com/portlandcorps>. 



Corps of Engineers photos

Bonneville team is key link in emergency medical care



Story and photos by Scott Clemans, Public Affairs Office

If an employee or visitor at Bonneville Lock and Dam becomes ill or injured, it could take 15 minutes or more for emergency medical service providers from Cascade Locks, Ore., Stevenson, Wash., or elsewhere to reach the scene.

The Bonneville Emergency Response Team is there to cover the gap until professional help arrives. The team's 15 volunteer members are trained and equipped to provide emergency care until an ambulance or helicopter can arrive.

"The care a patient receives in the first 5 to 10 minutes of an incident – the 'Golden 10 Minutes' – can make a big difference," said Natural Resource Manager Greg Webb, the team's administrative officer.

Dale Grams, director of public education for Skamania County Emergency Medical Services, illustrated that fact during BERT training in September.

During the first four minutes of many heart attacks, Grams told team members, the main problem is electrical, which can often be treated by quick and effective use of an automated external defibrillator. The main problem during the next several minutes is usually mechanical, which can be treated with CPR. Team members are trained in both AED use and CPR.

Team members span the project's entire grounds and workforce – electricians, mechanics, painters, park rangers, warehousemen and more. Each is equipped with a fanny pack containing basic first aid supplies. Ten larger response kits with AEDs, oxygen bottles, splints and other more advanced supplies are also deployed around the project.

Team members are certified at the Oregon First Responder level or above, attending an initial 60 hours of training followed by monthly refresher sessions. In addition to CPR and AED use, responders can administer oxygen – now recognized as a key part of CPR and other first aid techniques – stabilize patients using bandages, splints, backboards, cervical collars and other equipment, and collect personal and background information.

The goal, said park ranger and BERT leader Chelsie Morris, is to allow arriving EMS crews to focus on transporting the patient to a medical facility as quickly



Grams instructs painter Wes Buck in the proper technique for locating a pulse.



Grams instructs park ranger Brian McCavitt (left) and hydropower plant mechanic Mike Wikstrom in assisting an infant's breathing during CPR.

as possible rather than providing treatment. Team members are even able to put Life Flight medical helicopters on standby.

Team members have responded to situations as serious as heart attacks and anaphylactic shock from bee stings to those as trivial as bumps and bruises.

"Visitors are always impressed with how well we work together," Morris said. "Nothing has ever gone wrong because of us – we've always made the situation better." 📷

EMERGENCY MEDICAL TEAM



John Day Mitigation: *The river runs through it*

By Diana Fredlund, Public Affairs Office

This is the first in a series of articles about the John Day Mitigation Program.

Native Americans who live near the Columbia River and rely on its bounty tell stories of the robust fishery that once lived in the river.

As settlers moved into the Pacific Northwest, they realized the river offered transportation and power opportunities in addition to the robust fishery. As cities expanded, the federal government planned a series of dams on the Columbia River to aid navigation and create hydropower.

When Bonneville Lock and Dam, the first federal dam on the Columbia River was built in 1938, Native American fishers lost many of their traditional fishing areas. Under the four treaties signed in the spring of 1855 between the federal government and the Columbia River tribes – Confederated Tribes of the Warm Springs, Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla, The Yakama Indian Nation and the Nez Perce Tribe – the government pledged that these tribes' fisheries on the Columbia would be protected and forever available to them.

"The legal duty to mitigate for losses to fisheries as a consequence of river development flow directly from the United States' promise to

protect the fisheries that the tribes reserved in treaties, said John Ogan, a member of the *US v Oregon* committee.

In the early- and mid-20th century, the federal government's Indian policy and position on tribal affairs was known as termination. The belief was that Native Americans would benefit from being assimilated into society and this "new special relationship" would grant all the rights and privileges of United States citizenship. The implementation of the termination policy abrogated many existing treaties, led to the loss of Indian-controlled land and resources, and reduced the effectiveness of tribal leadership until the termination policy was abandoned.

The federal termination policy gave way to what is referred to as the "reconstruction" and "self determination" policies, under which tribes sought to reaffirm their rights to mitigation from construction of the Columbia River dams. A 1968 court case known as *US v Oregon* found that the 1855 treaty tribes' fishing rights were legally upheld, meaning the loss of treaty fishing sites must be mitigated. *US v Oregon* also created Zone 6 of the treaty fishery, allocated one-half of the allowable take to the treaty tribes and recognized the tribes as co-managers of the fishery. The case remains in the federal courts and is used to oversee tribal fishing rights.

Beginning in 1995, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers addressed what became known as in-place, in-kind mitigation for lost fish production due to construction of The Dalles and John Day dams. Portland District leaders entered into a cooperative agreement with federal and tribal agencies to construct two concrete raceways at the Ringold



The adult trap facility at Ringold Springs Hatchery successfully captures many returning salmon despite its primitive condition. The alternative report, scheduled to be released in January 2012, includes recommended improvements such as a new fish ladder and adult sorting facilities.

Springs Fish Hatchery, located on the Columbia River north of Pasco, Wash., to test its capacity to produce upriver bright fall chinook.

"The Corps constructed the Ringold Springs test facility more than 10 years ago and it has proven to

be a success," said Columbia River Fish Mitigation Project Manager George Miller. "The facility needs to be upgraded to allow adult fish management and increased juvenile capacity – as it only operates as a juvenile fish facility right now."



Corps of Engineers photos

Adult salmon raised at Ringold Springs Hatchery return to the facility to spawn. Adults enter the fish trap, above, and are transported to the Priest Rapids fish handling facility to provide egg stock for future generations of salmon.

Continued on page 8



One mitigation issue still undecided is the types and numbers of fish spawning in or traveling upstream through the section of river from Bonneville Dam to past the John Day Dam known as Zone 6.


“Much of the tribal fishing activity occurs in Zone 6, but until now mitigation efforts have been focused below Bonneville,” Ogan said. “We are working with the federal agencies to increase the number of salmon spawning above Bonneville Dam.”

“We understand the tribes’ request to produce the right species in the right locations to mitigate for impacts that occurred in the historic areas which now constitutes Zone 6,” said Miller. “There is an alternatives report being finalized that reviews current production and facilities to find ways to close the gap between current and desired in-place, in-kind production.” The report, due out in January 2012, offers the best alternatives to accomplish that objective Miller added.

Part of the gap in production comes from the type of fish being produced. “The current target is to produce more upper river bright fall chinook salmon, while maintaining the number of Tule fall chinook salmon,” said Miller.

“Upper river brights are a prized fish for the tribes, both for commercial purposes and their own use,” Ogan said. “Tribal fishers tell stories of the very large, bright salmon returning in the summer and early fall months and are anxious to have them return in abundance as they did before key mainstem spawning areas were inundated by federal dam construction.”

A lot has changed since the 1960s termination policy was reversed. Tribal leaders have re-emerged as a force of change and been effective in protecting traditional fishing rights. The Corps has constructed 30 tribal fishing access sites and should complete the last one in 2012. Perhaps the most significant impact has been that the Corps of Engineers, tribal leaders and other federal agencies are working together to find answers to some very difficult Columbia River fishery questions.

Ogan sees progress in tribal fishing rights. “I believe the overall perspective of Corps by the Columbia River treaty tribes could be stated as: ‘After 30 years, you seem to be getting things right. But there’s still a lot more to do.’” 

Ringold Springs Hatchery tests best practices

Beginning in 1998, the Corps conducted a survival study at the Ringold Springs Hatchery to determine whether earthen ponds performed as well as or better than concrete raceways for rearing juvenile salmon.

The 10-year study raised and released juveniles for the first five years in both the earthen ponds and concrete raceways. The second five years focused on analysis of the returning adults. The smolt-to-adult returns, or SARs, compared the rates of fish returning to the adult trap against those caught in the ocean that had coded wires attached identifying them as Ringold Springs fish.

“The study was a relative success,” said David Leonhardt, a fisheries biologist with the Portland District. “We learned that there may be a slight advantage for the fish reared in the earthen ponds. The pond-reared fish migrated faster downstream through the Columbia River and returned at a higher rate as adults than the raceway-reared fish.

The study results suggested that the earthen ponds offered a viable, cost-effective method for rearing juvenile salmon, Leonhardt said.

“Discussions continue about whether to retain earthen ponds when Ringold Springs is renovated,” Leonhardt said. “The alternatives study will further explore this possibility.”

The John Day Mitigation Alternatives Study, to be released in January 2012, will be discussed in the next issue of the Corps’ pondent.



Corps of Engineers photo

Portland District's Columbia River projects have fun for a cause



With a territory that spreads throughout Oregon and southwest Washington, it's easy to see why Portland District's operating projects along the Columbia River spearhead their own CFC campaigns. At each project you'll find a tight knit group of people who work hard, like to have fun and who have big hearts when it comes to giving.

John Day Project

Employees at the John Day Lock and Dam held several events CFC events, including a silent auction and a hot dog cookout.

"Our bakers created some impressive dishes for the auction and others brought items from home to donate,"



Photo by Christine Good

Employees at John Day Lock and Dam eat hotdogs for a cause.

said Blaise Jones, an administrative assistant at the dam. "But one of the most popular items up for bid was the offer by Kevin Moynihan, the dam's OPM (at the time), to shave his head!"

"A big thanks to everyone who helped us beat our goal," said Jones.

"Records are made to be broken though, and this is one we intend to break next year!"

The Dalles Lock and Dam

Head shaving and hair coloring as fundraising efforts for CFC were also popular at The Dalles Lock and Dam. Russ Johnson, chief of operations, shaved his head and Jay White, a power plant mechanic, dyed his long, white hair hot pink when his colleagues voted that he tint his locks the most extreme color available. Through these and other events, including a bake sale, employees exceeded their campaign goals for CFC.



Corps of Engineers photo

Jay White, a power plant mechanic at The Dalles Lock and Dam, had his hair dyed hot pink for CFC.

Bonneville Lock and Dam

Employees at Bonneville Lock and Dam kicked off their campaign in early October through a bake sale with goodies provided by different crews, supervisors, and chiefs. Later that month, more than 40 employees from around the dam turned out for a fitness run/walk followed by a soup and chili feed.

"This year's campaign exceeded our expectations both in employee participation and their generosity," said Amy Bosse, CFC coordinator for Bonneville's campaign. "A thanks to everyone who participated!"

October was profitable for the Combined Federal Campaign, in part, because of the efforts of employees working along the Columbia River – and fun for them as they ate, walked and shaved their heads – all to help those in need around the Pacific Northwest.



Photo by Amy Bosse

Bonneville Lock and Dam employees joined together one sunny October day for a CFC fitness run/walk.

PROJECTS HAVE FUN FOR CFC



CFC – 50 Years of Caring

Portland District employees respond with a legacy of generosity



Every autumn, employees across Portland District are invited to participate in the District's annual Combined Federal Campaign, an opportunity for them to learn about and donate to the charities that touch their hearts the most. This year's CFC theme celebrated '50 Years of Caring.'

During October at CFC fundraising activities held around the District, employees took part in chili feeds and bake sales and participated in fitness run/walks and marched in costume parades. They held silent auctions, set up breakfast food carts, flocked cubicles with flamingos, shaved their heads and dyed their hair – all to raise money to benefit those who are in need.

Through these fundraisers and your individual donations, we raised more than \$94,820, exceeding our District goal of \$80,000. Our success this year is due to you – thank you for your participation, generosity and commitment!



Corps of Engineers photos



COMBINED FEDERAL CAMPAIGN

COMBINED FEDERAL CAMPAIGN





Tribes and Corps return history to the soil

By Amy Echols, Public Affairs Office

In the September/October edition, Corps'pondent introduced Portland District's archaeologists who identify and protect our region's cultural resources. This story explores another element of their work: The return of Native American remains and artifacts to the tribes and the land.

Excavation for the construction of Portland District's dams unearthed more than boulders and mud. Archaeologists uncovered Native American artifacts and human remains, those deep in the soil for hundreds of years, from the 1930s through the mid-70s. This safeguarded them from destruction and permanent loss under the reservoirs and dams.

The Corps and other agencies developing the Pacific Northwest, crated up many of these artifacts and remains. Warehouses at Bonneville Dam, the University of Oregon's Museum of Natural and Cultural History and elsewhere stored the "inventory" from the excavations for many years.

As legislation to preserve historical and archaeological sites gained momentum, federal agencies began collaborating with tribes to repatriate, or return, human remains, sacred burial objects and other items, from the recent past to prehistoric times, to the tribes, often

reburying them as close to their original location as possible.

Using a process legislated under the 1990 Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act, Dan Mulligan, an archaeologist in Portland District, collaborates with museums and tribes (including their lineal descendants) to identify stored items and determine their most accurate cultural affiliation.

"Using tribal history and records of excavations and removals, we do our best to figure out what items are historically connected to which tribe. It can take many years from initiation of an inventory to



Corps of Engineers photos

Remains and artifacts await reburial after their airlift to Wishxam Cemetery in Washington, the site of Portland District's first repatriation in 1995.

the actual reburial of artifacts and remains," said Mulligan.

He notifies tribes of their possible affiliation with the inventoried items. Tribes then submit a claim showing how their present day group "identity" can be traced historically or prehistorically to the items.

"Simplified: The preponderance of evidence should reasonably lead to a tribe's cultural affiliation with an item. This is based on geographical, kinship, biological, archaeological, folklore, oral tradition, treaty documents and historical evidence," Mulligan explains. "With these details, it's not uncommon to spend time resolving conflicts when more than one tribe claims the same items."



Photo: AnnArbor.com

Tens of thousands of Native American human remains and artifacts are stored in university and museum collections throughout the United States.



The journey home

In the mid-90s, Portland District assisted the Smithsonian Institution in resolving disputed claims between descendants of the Wasco Tribe (one of the Warm Springs Tribes) and the Yakama Nation over remains and artifacts removed from the Memaloose islands in the Bonneville and The Dalles pools. The District's support contributed to a joint tribal petition for repatriation and a reburial at the Wishxam Cemetery in Washington in 1995.

The District lead a repatriation effort to return three sets of human remains and 166 burial artifacts, originally removed from areas impacted by the Corps' Rogue River dams and reservoirs in southern Oregon, to the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde and the Cow Creek Band of Umpqua tribes in April 2010.

Another repatriation project began in 2007 and took three years to complete. Early on, Mulligan worked closely with the University of Oregon's Museum of Natural and Cultural History, the Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs (from the Oregon side of the Columbia River) and the Yakama Nation (from the Washington side) to determine the cultural affiliation of items from about a dozen sites dating from 150 to 3,000 years ago.

The tribes, whose ancestors shared territories on both sides of the river, jointly claimed 63


individuals' remains and 780 artifacts. Forensic anthropologists examined the characteristics of the commingled remains to help determine the age, gender and number of individuals represented and determine their historic location, north or south of the river.

Tribes, Corps and museum representatives honored the past and the completion of this repatriation with a traditional ceremony of prayers, songs and rituals at The Dalles Dam in November 2010. Each tribe then hosted joint ceremonies on both sides of the river where they buried the remains in carefully selected and protected locations.

A Native American village near The Dalles, used for more than 9,000 years, was the original home of 134 individuals' remains and over 2,600 artifacts. In April 2011, the Warm Springs, Yakama and Umatilla tribes, along with Portland District and the museum, completed the repatriation with a reburial in a

specific area near this village that was used for at least the past 2,500 years as a burial site.

"Returning ancestral remains and burial artifacts to their cultural homelands is the ultimate goal," states Mulligan. "Keeping the specific reburial location confidential but to a few maintains respect for Native American history and culture and reduces vandalism. It's a matter of respect and finality long due to the first Americans."

The Portland District completed its final repatriation (based on collections for which the District is responsible) Dec. 6., when the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde receive human remains excavated during construction of Corps projects in the Willamette Valley. 



Corps of Engineers photo

A commemorative monument stands tall at the Wishxam Cemetery, 1995.

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Photo courtesy of Roberta Kirk, Confederated Tribes of the Warm Springs

Elders and members of the Confederated Tribes of the Warm Springs, Yakama Nation and Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation, with staff from Portland District and The Dalles and John Day dams, pose on a hillside over the Columbia River after reburial ceremonies in April 2011.

An interview with perspective

The author spoke with Paul Cloutier, the Corps' Northwest Division Tribal Liaison and a member of the Saginaw Chippawa Indian tribe, and Dan Mulligan, Portland District archaeologist, about their personal perspectives on repatriation.

AE: What does repatriation mean to you?

Paul: To the tribes, it means—finally—rest and peace; that we've come full circle by doing right by our ancestors. Repatriation also sets a standard for future generations to do the right thing, especially when you won't be around to speak for yourself.

Dan: Many Native American groups have worked very hard to preserve their traditional culture, much more so than other non-native American groups. I have deep respect for that. Our ancestors—everyone's ancestors—and what they did are the reason we're all here. The Tribes know their spirits and ongoing influence need to be tended to, cared for and respected; it's an integral part of their being.

How does it feel to have these cultural treasures and ancestral remains reburied?

Paul: With my tribal lineage, I am very proud that I was part of these repatriations, that I helped the government fulfill its responsibilities to our tribal partners. I served as a facilitator and guide when my perspective and experience could help.

Does repatriation change or influence your perceptions of the past?

Paul: From a tribal perspective, this doesn't erase the past but changes the manner in which the story is told. It adds a new chapter. We can now say, "Look how the Corps has responded"—with a commitment and prioritization to ensure all the remains, burial and other artifacts don't remain in a museum or curation facility.

It would be crude and egotistical for me to say that as a Corps employee, an archaeologist and as a descendent of "white" American history, I'm trying to help right some of the nastier wrongs committed against the Indian Tribes. We all have ancestors; we're all part of some tribe of the world or descended from one and probably several, so it's easy to empathize on many levels.

Did the Corps do this because the law tells us to?

Paul: Yes, we do it because we have to but we've moved past that now. The Corps has recognized and acted on its moral obligation to do the right thing. We'd want it done for ourselves.

What can non-tribal people learn from this?

Paul: If you look back far enough, every person, regardless of lineage and history, has descended from some tribal society. It's rained on your parade too. Our history is dotted with trials but we should feel comforted because we've helped bring closure to long-standing issues.

Dan: I hope my involvement in repatriations is viewed from the perspective of a "fellow" human being, rather than as a non-Tribal "white man." By some bizarre twist of fate, I've been given the honor of helping some people reclaim something that's very, very important to them.

So, as a Corps employee I can feel good about being part of the solution, not part of the problem?

Paul: Yes, that's about it. We learn and acknowledge and move forward.

Dan: There's not much that's more spiritually and culturally atrocious than knowing your revered ancestors' remains have been taken from their graves and kept like so many artifacts. Likewise, it's also spiritually and culturally atrocious to realize and accept that we've come from a society that allowed this to go on for so long. So, repatriation can be seen as a kind of path toward healing and renewal for everyone involved.

CITY GIRL **DRAGGED** into the **WOODS**



A commentary by Michelle Helms, Public Affairs Office

About a year ago I was encouraged to sign up for the Corps of Engineers' Native American Environmental and Cultural Resources, or cultural perspectives, training. Encouraged is probably the wrong word. I was volunteered. Normally I wouldn't hesitate to take advantage of a training opportunity; particularly one to learn more about another culture. This one was different.

The Corps' Purple Book of PROSPECT training opportunities course description reads "This course identifies sustainable environmental principles through immersion in a culture different than one's own and exposes students to practices that have enabled Native Americans to thrive for thousands of years."

Immersion. As in "in over my head." The course, steeped in Native American culture and traditions, is taught in, what is for me, an untraditional way – in the woods. I am not comfortable in the woods. I tried hiking as a kid, but got completely lost. I don't like bugs; critters scare me. I never camped. Ever. I was a nervous wreck about participating in this course, which was held the first week of October at Indian Lake on the Umatilla Indian Reservation.

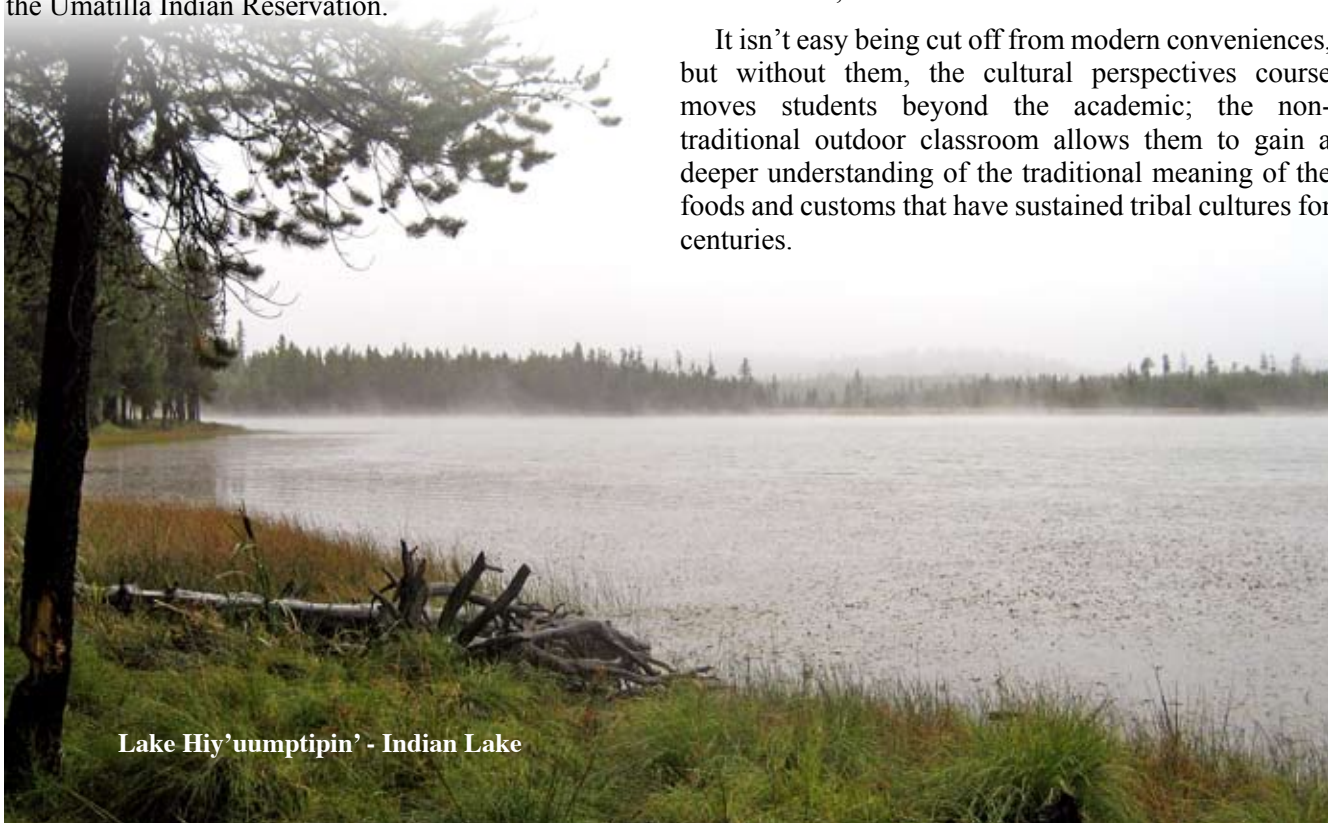
Bambi Rodriguez and Wenix Red Elk are program managers for the Cultural Resources Protection Program of the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation. They led the pre-training conference call to tell us what to expect during our four days and three nights immersed in the Native American culture. They told us to come with an open mind, ready to listen and to be prepared to live outside; and to bring extra blankets because at night it was already below freezing(!).

Turns out, I wasn't the only person nervous about the experience.

"From cold-weather camping to the clothing-optional sweat-lodge experiences, it became clear very quickly that this class would take me outside of my normal comfort zone," said Carolyn Schneider, environmental resource manager, Portland District.

Getting people out of their comfort zone and unplugged from their routine is a key part of the cultural perspectives training. And when they say "unplugged" they aren't kidding; no cell phones, no computers, no electricity. Also, no indoor plumbing; not just out of our comfort zone, but WAY out of our comfort zone!

It isn't easy being cut off from modern conveniences, but without them, the cultural perspectives course moves students beyond the academic; the non-traditional outdoor classroom allows them to gain a deeper understanding of the traditional meaning of the foods and customs that have sustained tribal cultures for centuries.



Lake Hiy'uumtipin' - Indian Lake

Photo by Michelle Helms, Public Affairs Office

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TRIBAL IMMERSION COURSE



TRIBAL IMMERSION COURSE

"The experience becomes more ingrained when students are taken out of their normal every day environment," said Paul Cloutier, Northwestern Division tribal liaison. "It also helps students to think about the forced dramatic changes tribal people went through since the founding of our country."

Shortly after we arrived we got our first lesson in living outside: tipi building. Lloyd Barkley, an expert tipi builder and Yakama Nation member with ties to CTUIR, showed us how to select the poles and assemble the frames for the tipis we would sleep in that week. The frames were wrapped in canvas and provided shelter from the wind and rain that arrived just as we gathered around the fire to begin our lessons.

"Living and learning in this environment touches different parts of our brain," said JR Inglis, Portland District tribal liaison and Nez Perce tribal member. "It helps you understand the Native American perspective on just about everything, especially the environment, which enables you to effectively work with the tribes."

The CTUIR Natural Resources program is designed around the tribes' first foods: water, fish, big game, berries and roots. The First Foods concept is relatively easy to grasp intellectually. But when it's explained while sitting around a campfire, the smells and sounds of nature surrounding you, you realize it's more than a concept. The creation story explains how these resources were created, and how they agreed to sustain people as long as people protected them.

"It's very different from the utilitarian approach that we grew up with," said Shelly



Photo by Michelle Helms, Public Affairs Office

Positioning and securing the top of the tipi poles properly ensures the structure stands strong against the elements. (left to right: Cody Wheeler, Kansas City District regulatory project manager; Ron Twiner, Portland District The Dalles operations project manager; Kanale Sadowski, Honolulu District assistant district counsel.)



Photo by Sylvia Guerrero, Sacramento District



Photo by Michelle Helms, Public Affairs Office



Photo by Sylvia Guerrero, Sacramento District

"Tribal members know that their ancestors have lived on this particular land for thousands of years," said Carolyn Schneider. That is a concept that is very foreign in our modern American culture."

Lynch, regulatory project manager in the Portland District. “It helped me understand that the tribes care for these resources with respect and reverence and gratefulness.”

This holistic approach to resource management and world view was reinforced throughout the week by tribal members who expertly wove the creation story and First Foods concepts into more familiar classroom-type lessons and hands-on cultural activities such as flint knapping, weaving and taking part in the sweat, a physical and spiritual cleansing ritual.

“I realized during the week that the Umatilla were opening their home to us, as their guests,” said Joyce Casey, Portland District Environmental Branch chief.

“The sweats, the alternately emotional and humorous presentations, the story telling and dancing all contributed to the experience,” said Sean Tackley, a Portland District fishery biologist.

Each day representatives from various CTUIR departments of Natural Resources, such as Water

David Wolf, CTUIR tribal member and elder, looks on as Tim Anderson, Portland District counsel, ties a knot in a fishing net. Wolf demonstrated how tribal members create the nets used to fish in the Columbia River.



Photos by Michelle Helms, Public Affairs Office

Resources, Fisheries, Range and Agriculture, and Cultural Resources Protection gave presentations on the importance of the First Foods resources and the tribes’ perspectives on how best to manage them.

In the evenings, elders, elected leaders and members of the CTUIR shared stories and memories passed on to them from their ancestors. They explained that these shared stories are the connections between generations; they pass on wisdom and give guidance to younger generations.



Handouts and a display were used to supplement the cultural information presented during “class” time. Many students said the hands-on lessons and participation in traditional activities gave them a deeper understanding of the tribes’ culture.

“It’s more than just a collection of traditions,” said Lt. Col. David Caldwell, commander of the Walla Walla District. “This is the fabric of their lives and beliefs.”

Being immersed in a new culture isn’t easy, but we survived sleeping in tipis and being outside in freezing, wet weather. We were disconnected from our modern lives, but found ourselves connected to a culture with deep roots in the land that sustains us all.

Some of us just had to be dragged into the woods to get that perspective. 📷



“The sweats, the alternately emotional and humorous presentations, the story telling and dancing all contributed greatly to the experience,” said Sean Tackley, Portland District fish biologist. “I found that the experience really touched me on spiritual and emotional levels.”



TRIBAL IMMERSION COURSE



The Corps celebrates American Indian and Alaskan Native Heritage, Ties

Article courtesy of USACE Office of Public Affairs with photo by the National Congress of American Indians

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers joined the nation in November to observe National Native American Heritage Month, which celebrates and recognizes the accomplishments of this country's original explorers, settlers and inhabitants.

Since the earliest days of contact with European explorers, Native American Tribes have been a part of our destiny. Tribes have fought by our side, and have fought against us as well. They figure prominently in our past, present and future. History shows that the majority culture was not kind to the first Americans and although prejudice still exists, along with extreme poverty and neglect among their ranks, the wounds are slowly healing and Tribal cultures are regaining lost ground and excelling. Through the years, Native Americans courageously worked with the early U.S. Cavalry as scouts, in World War II as Code Talkers, and in every conflict making the ultimate sacrifice for our freedom. To this day, 24 Native American Indians have earned the Medal of Honor for their courage and devotion to our nation.

Today, American Indian and Alaska Native Soldiers, civilians, veterans and family members represent the very best of our nation and reflect a long legacy of service.

What is the Corps doing?

Thanks to the work of USACE Tribal liaisons in every District office and nearly 200 professionals throughout the Corps, we are working to maintain and strengthen positive, lasting relationships with some 567 federally recognized American Indian and Alaska Native Tribes. Our six Tribal Policy Principles include:

- Meet the Trust responsibility;
- Honor the government-to government relationship;
- Acknowledge the inherent sovereignty of Tribes;
- Engage in pre-decisional consultation;
- Protect natural and cultural resources when possible;
- Find opportunities to use existing authorities to encourage economic capacity building and growth.

Currently USACE efforts are paying off:

- Co-sponsoring the American Indian Science and Engineering Society, which works to increase the representation of American Indian and Alaska Natives in engineering, science and other related technology disciplines;
- Recruiting Native Americans to join the USACE team;
- Working within the Small Business Program to enable more native companies to successfully compete for contracts.

National Congress of American Indians Annual Conference Portland District sponsors booth to generate awareness

The National Congress of American Indians started its 68th Annual Conference and Marketplace Oct. 30 at the Oregon Convention Center. During the week-long event, Portland District regulatory, small business and natural resource management staff along with others manned a booth to educate visitors about our mission and how we work with tribes. They also highlighted the Corps coordination with tribes on a variety of projects, including fish passage, Celilo Village and Columbia River Treaty Fishing Access and In-Lieu Sites.

The conference began along the Willamette riverfront where several canoes of families landed to celebrate their ancestor's journey, welcomed by traditional songs and drums. On shore, they joined tribal leaders, delegates (in full regalia) and others on foot and horseback for a 1.6 mile grand procession to the convention center. There, a color guard comprised of Native American veterans was posted as traditional songs played to honor the proceedings.

Sailing to victory in Tualatin's pumpkin regattas



Portland District volunteers raced in the Eighth Annual Tualatin Pumpkin Regatta on Oct. 22. The eight volunteers, all from the Engineering and Construction Division, raced Tualatin Valley Fire and Rescue.

Each team had four pumpkins, and paddled there-and-back in a two-wave relay. A close race, this year's victory marked the District team's third consecutive win at the annual regatta. 🏆



Photo by Rebecca Lovin



Engineering and Construction employees sail to their third victory in Tualatin's pumpkin regatta.

Top: James Lovin, Brent Welton, Jordan Reimer, Alan Stokke

Bottom: Matt Hess, Dennis Petross, Brian Roche, Ellen Ballantine



Photos by Mark Sawka, Engineering and Construction Division

PUMPKIN REGATTA



Postcard from Afghanistan

David Chenoweth- Portland, Oregon



I am here from Portland, Oregon for my third time over in Theater. I am currently a schedule A employee assigned to the Kunduz Resident as a Construction Control Representative working with the ANP program. I have enjoyed immensely the rewards and great teamwork of working with the local Afghan Engineers and USACE personnel assigned to Kunduz. I also have enjoyed learning the customs, and getting to know the local people of Kunduz, Afghanistan. This is a very rugged area with varying terrain and diverse people. This is a once in a lifetime experience the people of this area; they are very appreciative of our efforts.

It is equally rewarding to build the complex projects that will help sustain the people of Afghanistan into the next century. I know that what we are doing over here will help jumpstart the people of Afghanistan to bring their country into peace and prosperity. The everyday rewards of seeing smiling faces here helps to bring back fond memories of home for me. To just go out to the people and visit with them, talk to them about the dreams they have for Afghanistan is an opportunity of a lifetime for me and a chance to help better my fellow man.

